

UNIT 437

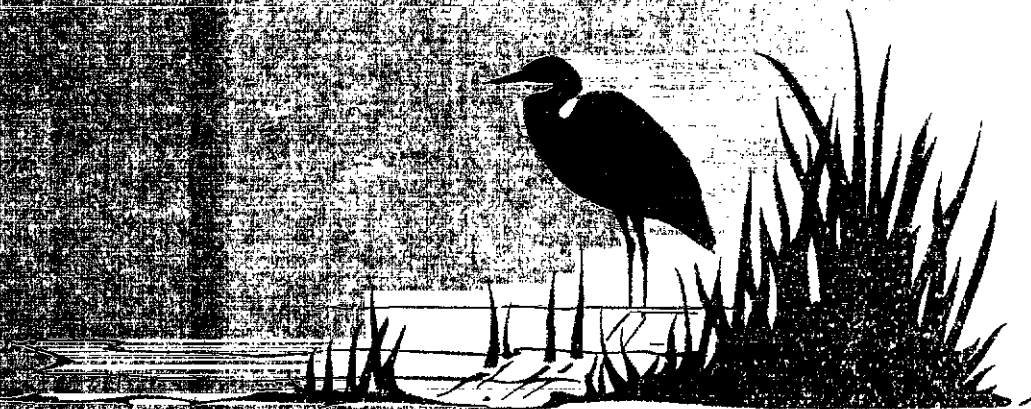
CARMEL RIVER STATE BEACH

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (*)

March 1996

(*) Note: This unit's General Plan amendment is contained within
the general plan amendment document
for two units, Carmel River SB and Point Lobos SR

Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach



Preliminary General Plan Amendment
October 1995



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach Preliminary General Plan Amendment

October 1995

PETE WILSON
Governor

DOUGLAS P. WHEELER
Secretary for Resources

DONALD W. MURPHY
Director of Parks and Recreation



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Table of Contents

Purpose	1
Public and Community Involvement	1
General Plan Background	2
Carmel Area Land Use Plan	3
Resource Management Policies	4
Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan	4
Land Use and Facilities	5
Justification	5
Public Access	6
Carmel Area Wastewater Treatment Plant Access	7
Implementation	7
Figure 1 - Carmel River Lagoon and Vicinity Map	9
Figure 2 - Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan Map	10
Figure 3 - General Plan Amendment Map	11
Figure 4 - Interim Management Strategy Map	12
References	13
Appendix - California Environmental Quality Act Compliance	14
Notice of Determination	
Comment Letters	
Negative Declaration	

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 942896, SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-0524

February 21, 1996

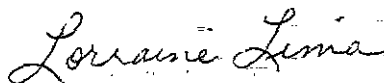
The Honorable Sarah Flores, Chairman
and Members
State Park and Recreation Commission

Dear Commissioners:

Enclosed are the following documents for the March 26, 1996 meeting in Carmel regarding the Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment:

- Notice of Hearing on March 26, 1996
- Preliminary Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment dated October 1995, including CEQA Comments

Sincerely,



Lorraine Lima
Assistant Secretary

Enclosures

cc: Director
Chief Deputy Director
Deputy Director, Park Stewardship
Chief, Environmental Design Division
Chief, Resource Management Division
Chief, Southern Division
Manager, General Plans
Monterey District Headquarters--Post Notice in Unit
Public Affairs Office (Letter and Notice only)
Harrison Memorial Library, Carmel
Deputy Attorney General
Department of Finance (Letter and Notice only)
Legislative Analyst's Office (Letter and Notice only)

Note: The Park and Recreation Commission approved this Preliminary General Plan in MARCH 1996
A Final General Plan was printed dated MARCH 1996

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 942896, SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001

**NOTICE OF HEARING ON MARCH 26, 1996
CALIFORNIA STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the State Park and Recreation Commission, pursuant to authority contained in Section 5002.3 et seq. of the Public Resources Code, Section 11370 et seq. of the Government Code and pursuant to law, will meet on Tuesday, March 26, 1996 at 9 a.m. at the Mission Ranch, 26270 Dolores Street, Carmel, CA. The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. Agenda items will include action on the proposed Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment, and the on-premises sale of wine during the 1996 summer concert series at Mendocino Headlands State Park.

Copies of the General Plan Amendment will be available for review at the State Department of Parks and Recreation's Monterey District, 2211 Garden Road, Monterey; the Department's Headquarters, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento; and the Harrison Memorial Library, Ocean Ave. & Lincoln St., Carmel.

NOTICE IS GIVEN that any person may file a statement regarding hearing items by writing to the undersigned or by presenting oral or written statements at the hearing at **9:30 a.m.** or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard. Inquiries may be directed to Lorraine Lima (916) 653-0524, or the Department of Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001.

NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN that the Commission plans to tour State Park units in the Monterey/Carmel area including Carmel River State Beach and Asilomar State Beach on Monday, March 25. No public testimony and no action will be taken by the Commission during this tour.

SO ORDERED:

Donald W. Murphy, Secretary
State Park and Recreation Commission

Purpose

The purpose of this amendment is to change the land use designation on the 155 acre Odello west field within Carmel River State Beach from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat. This parcel has been leased for agricultural use since it was acquired by the state in 1974. This amendment will bring the State Beach general plan in conformance with the Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan completed in 1991 through the efforts of the Carmel River Steelhead Association, the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The enhancement plan calls for changing the land use on the Odello west field from agriculture to native vegetation. The Department supports the goals of the enhancement plan and recommends that the State Parks and Recreation Commission amend the general plan to bring it into conformance with the enhancement plan.

The proposed land use change will facilitate use of the Odello west field as a floodway for the Carmel River, reducing the likelihood of flooding residential and commercial property on the north side of the river. Monterey County funded preparation of an engineering report in 1988 that recommends utilization of the Odello west field as a floodway as part of a Lower Carmel River Flood Control Project. The Mission Fields residential area on the north side of the river flooded in January and March 1995.

Public and Community Involvement

Following the January 1995 floods Monterey County Supervisor Sam Karas formed the Carmel River Task Force. The task force was comprised of individuals from the neighborhoods directly affected by the flood and staff from agencies responsible for responding to flood-related emergencies. State Park staff participated in the task force. The task force's primary goal was to develop strategies that minimize risks to the public safety and limit personal property and structural losses, and reduce post-flood governmental expenditures. One of the recommendations in the task force's May 1995 final report was:

Work with the State Parks and Recreation Department, the California Coastal Commission, and all other responsible agencies in implementing the Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan. The plan includes removing the State owned levee west of Highway One and converting the agricultural fields to riparian and wetland habitat.

In April 1995 State Park staff prepared a preliminary draft of this general plan

amendment and circulated it to the following agencies for comments:

Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
Carmel River Steelhead Association
State Coastal Conservancy
Department of Fish and Game
Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department
Carmel Area Wastewater District
California Coastal Commission

On August 30, 1995 a public meeting was held at the Carmel Middle School to discuss the proposed general plan amendment. Approximately 50 local residents and agency representatives attended the meeting. There was strong support expressed for the proposed amendment.

General Plan Background

The General Plan for Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach was approved in May 1979. The plan was amended in June 1987 to include a 36 acre parcel near San Jose Creek Beach that was added to Carmel River State Beach in 1981.

The 1979 General Plan includes the following discussion regarding the Odello west field:

page 79 Several years ago the Odello property artichoke field was purchased by the State of California to preserve it from potential residential development. This property, which contains 62.7 hectares (155 acres), is presently leased by a contract administered by the Department of General Services. Although an access road across the property exists for the Carmel Sanitation District Treatment Plant, no public access is provided. Two farm builds currently used by the lessee for storage, are also located on the property. The agricultural use is recognized as having historic value. *buildings*

page 89 The Odello property was originally purchased to prevent potential urban development from encroaching upon the natural qualities and scenic beauty of the Carmel River area. The use of this property as an agricultural field is well justified, considering the statewide need for farmable land and the historical aspects of this use. It is recommended that the property remain in agricultural use as long as possible.

page 93 The General Plan map includes the following notation: ODELLO WEST -
continue agricultural use.

The Carmel River Lagoon and Wetland Natural Preserve was established by the State Park and Recreation Commission in November 1985. This action was recommended in the 1979 General Plan. Following implementation of the recommendations in this plan the Odello West area may be a suitable addition to the natural preserve; no addition to the natural preserve is proposed at this time.

Carmel Area Land Use Plan

Monterey County prepared the Carmel Area Land Use Plan as part of the local coastal program. The plan was certified on April 14, 1983 and includes the following statement regarding Odello west:

Policy 2.6.4.2 The agricultural use of the entire State-owned prime agricultural parcel should be continued. In order to protect the scenic views from Highway 1 to the ocean, the agricultural usage should continue to be a low type of crop such as artichokes.

In addition, the regulations for development in the Carmel River Land Use Plan area include the following statement:

Section 20.146.070.B.3 Odello west shall be designated "Agricultural Preservation" in order to conserve the land for exclusive agricultural use.

The Land Use Plan also includes the following policy in the Environmentally Sensitive Habitats section:

Policy 2.3.5.4 The County should encourage the restoration of sensitive plant habitats on public and private lands. A program to control and eliminate noxious non-native vegetation should be developed in conjunction with the State Department of Parks and Recreation and State Department of Fish and Game.

The proposed change in land use on the Odello west field from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat is in conflict with the specific policy in the Carmel Area Land Use Plan regarding Odello west but is consistent with the general policy regarding restoration of sensitive plant habitats.

Resource Management Policies

Resource Management policies in State Park General Plans are intended to protect natural and cultural resources, and to provide direction for future development efforts. Policies in the existing General Plan and Amendment provide for the necessary protection of resources and the proposed land use change for the Odello west field does not require additional policy statements. The 1987 General Plan Amendment includes the following resource management policy:

In order to preserve the integrity of the wetlands at Carmel River State Beach, a wetland management plan shall be prepared and implemented. The plan shall address wetland restoration, vegetation management (including exotic species control), wildlife management, flood control, and pollution abatement.

The wetland management plan recommended in the above policy is the Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan, completed in 1991.

Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan

This General Plan Amendment would bring the Carmel River State Beach General Plan in conformance with the wetland enhancement plan. The goal of the enhancement plan is to restore the lagoon, wetland and adjacent areas to natural conditions, to the extent feasible, using the 1876 map as the best indicator of natural conditions. The plan was prepared to be compatible with flood control objectives around the lagoon and along the lower Carmel River. The specific recommendations in the enhancement plan are to:

1. Dredge the south arm of the lagoon to its estimated length in 1876, about 2,000 feet, with the bottom 2 feet below mean sea level.
2. Excavate soil around the dredged south arm to establish elevations where a 10 acre freshwater marsh can be established.
3. Restore the Odello west artichoke field to its natural condition as a riparian forest.
4. Remove much of the levee south of the Carmel River and adjacent to the Odello west field.

The historical, hydrologic, and biological conditions that led to these recommendations is discussed in the enhancement plan. Full implementation of these recommendations would lead to the elimination of all agricultural production within the

State Beach. The proposed actions recommended in the enhancement plan are shown on Figure 2, page 10.

Land Use and Facilities

This General Plan amendment recommends the change in the land use designation of the Odello west field from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat. The area affected by the proposed amendment is shown on Figure 3, page 11. Habitat restoration efforts would be dependent upon the availability of funds. Agricultural use could continue as an interim use until restoration funding is available. Restoration could be phased with continued agricultural use on all or portions of the field.

The existing farm buildings on the Odello west field will continue to be available for equipment and material storage. They could be leased to the operators of the agricultural land east of the freeway or used to support park operations.

Trail access across the restored habitat areas is recommended. Possible trail locations are described in the enhancement plan. Specific locations will be determined following implementation of restoration activities. Access may have to be restricted consistent with protecting public safety and habitat values.

Justification

The justification for the proposed land use change from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat is based on two elements: the need to restore altered natural habitats and the need for improved flood protection in the lower Carmel River.

In California, approximately 70 percent of coastal wetland acreage has been destroyed since 1900. Because such a large proportion of wetland habitat has been lost, the California Coastal Act requires that the "biological productivity and the quality of the coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes... be maintained, and where feasible, restored..." (Article 4, Section 30231). The lagoon enhancement plan clearly documents the historic presence of wetland and riparian habitats on the Odello west site and proposes a feasible restoration concept.

Improved flood protection in the lower Carmel River area is clearly needed in light of the January and March 1995 flood events. Restoration of the Odello west field to its historic function as a floodway and riparian forest is the appropriate solution to both flood protection needs and resource enhancement goals.

The 1979 general plan justifies the agricultural land use designation based on the historic use of this field for agriculture. While the historic use of the Odello west field for agriculture is acknowledged, the restoration of the field to wetland and riparian habitat can also be justified as a historic use. The 1876 map indicates that most of what is now an artichoke field was forested or part of the lagoon and wetland.

In summary the following changed circumstances since the 1979 decision to keep this land in agriculture that justify the change include:

- ▶ Completion of the Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan in 1991
- ▶ Completion of the Lower Carmel River Flood Control Project Report in 1988
- ▶ Increased awareness of the values of riparian and wetland habitat and the demonstrated feasibility of habitat restoration.
- ▶ The January and March 1995 floods.

Public Access

Public access to the Odello West field has not been encouraged or accommodated since the land was acquired by the State in 1974. The proposed land use change from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat will create an opportunity for establishing public trails through the area. The Lagoon Enhancement Plan includes recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian trails. A trail from the Carmel River Bridge at Highway One to the beach area south of the river mouth could be established to provide access to the south side of the river when access across the beach is blocked by the flowing river. A bridge could cross the south arm of the lagoon over or adjacent to an existing waste water pipe.

A pedestrian/bicycle bridge could also be established across the Carmel River connecting the City of Carmel's Rio Park with the State Beach. The bridge would not be on State property but trail connections could be provided. The bridge would be either on City or Wastewater District property. If the bridge project were implemented this would be a separate project requiring its own environmental review process. The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District is investigating the bridge project.

No public parking is proposed for the Odello west area. Users of the proposed trail would be expected to walk across the Highway One bridge from residential or commercial areas on the north side of the river. Future trail connections may be developed. A regional trail along the Carmel River has been proposed that, if developed, could be connected to a trail on the Odello west field. When the lagoon mouth is closed access could be available by parking in the existing State Beach lot adjacent to Scenic Drive and walking across the beach to connect with trails on the south side of the river mouth.

Carmel Area Wastewater Treatment Plant Access

The Carmel Area Wastewater Treatment Plant entrance road runs parallel to the river from Highway One to the plant. When the river flooded and the levees were breached in March 1995 the floodwater damaged the road. The road damage combined with the failure of the Highway One bridge prevented vehicle access to the plant for two weeks. Treatment plant staff were able to keep the plant operating but they were unable to remove sludge from the site. It is important that the frequency and duration of access disruptions to the plant be minimized. Access disruptions have the potential to disrupt operation of the plant which would cause significant public health and environmental problems for the region.

The breached levees and the proposal in the enhancement plan to remove the levee adjacent to the treatment plant road will require that the road be relocated or modified to provide reliable access to the plant. The Wastewater District is working with DPR and other agencies on a new alignment for the road that will provide for the needed access. The road will be elevated to provide for protection against moderate flood events and may be armored to reduce the potential for damage when the road is inundated by bigger flood events. Culverts may be included in the design to allow low flows to pass under the road.

Implementation

The March 1995 flood events have required decisions and actions prior to approval of this general plan amendment. The Monterey County Department of Public Works breached the levee on State Beach property at two locations adjacent to the Odello west field on March 10, 1995. This emergency work was done in an attempt to prevent flooding of the developed areas on the north side of the river. Water flowing through these breeches significantly damaged the artichoke crop, the field, and farm facilities and equipment. In light of the desire to move ahead with this general plan amendment, the need to reduce the threat of future flooding, and to avoid some of the costs associated with fully repairing the damage to the field, an interim management strategy has been developed. This strategy involves the following elements:

1. Remove approximately 46 acres adjacent to the river from agricultural production and allow it to revert to non-native/native vegetation. This area would be removed from agriculture to allow continued use of the area as a floodway, to expand habitat, and to avoid costs of flood damage repair. Future efforts would be undertaken to control weeds and establish riparian vegetation.

2. Retain approximately 98 acres in agriculture.
3. Construct 3 to 5 foot high berms along the new west and north boundaries of the agricultural fields to reduce the threat of flood damage.
4. Relocate the access road to the Carmel Area Wastewater Plant along a portion of the new berm. Construct an additional road segment to make the connection to the treatment plant. This segment would be elevated on a berm with several culverts installed to allow water passage.

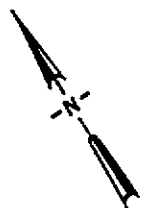
The decision to move ahead with this strategy prior to the approval of this general plan amendment was made in recognition of the need to allow our tenants to replant so they could produce a crop next year, the need to maintain the gaps in the levee to reduce the threat of flooding across the river, and the desire to effectively use limited public and private funds in anticipation of the decision to change land use of this area. The interim management actions are shown on Figure 4, page 12.

Approval of this general plan amendment will bring the State Beach plan in conformance with the actions already taken, the lagoon enhancement plan, and the proposed flood control project. Other actions are being planned including possible removal of the levees using Federal disaster funds, and possible partial implementation of the lagoon enhancement plan using Caltrans mitigation funds.

Following approval of the General Plan Amendment by the State Park and Recreation Commission the Department will recommend that Monterey County and the Coastal Commission bring the Local Coastal Plan into conformance with the amended State Park general plan.

The full implementation of the Carmel Lagoon Enhancement Plan will require significant funding. We are already implementing portions of the plan. It will be possible to implement other elements of the plan as opportunities becomes available. Levee removal for flood control purposes could be implemented independent of other proposals in the enhancement plan. Continued use of the land currently leased for agricultural purposes can continue until the opportunity becomes available to convert the field to native habitat.

The proposed general plan amendment is limited to changing the land use designation on the Odello west field from agriculture to riparian and wetland habitat. It is not proposed to adopt the specific proposals in the enhancement plan because funding limitations, changing environmental conditions, and unforeseen issues may require that the detailed project elements proposed in the enhancement plan be modified. Limiting the amendment to a simple change in land use designation will give the Department the necessary flexibility to work toward the goal of habitat restoration for the Odello west field without being limited to the specific proposals in the enhancement plan.

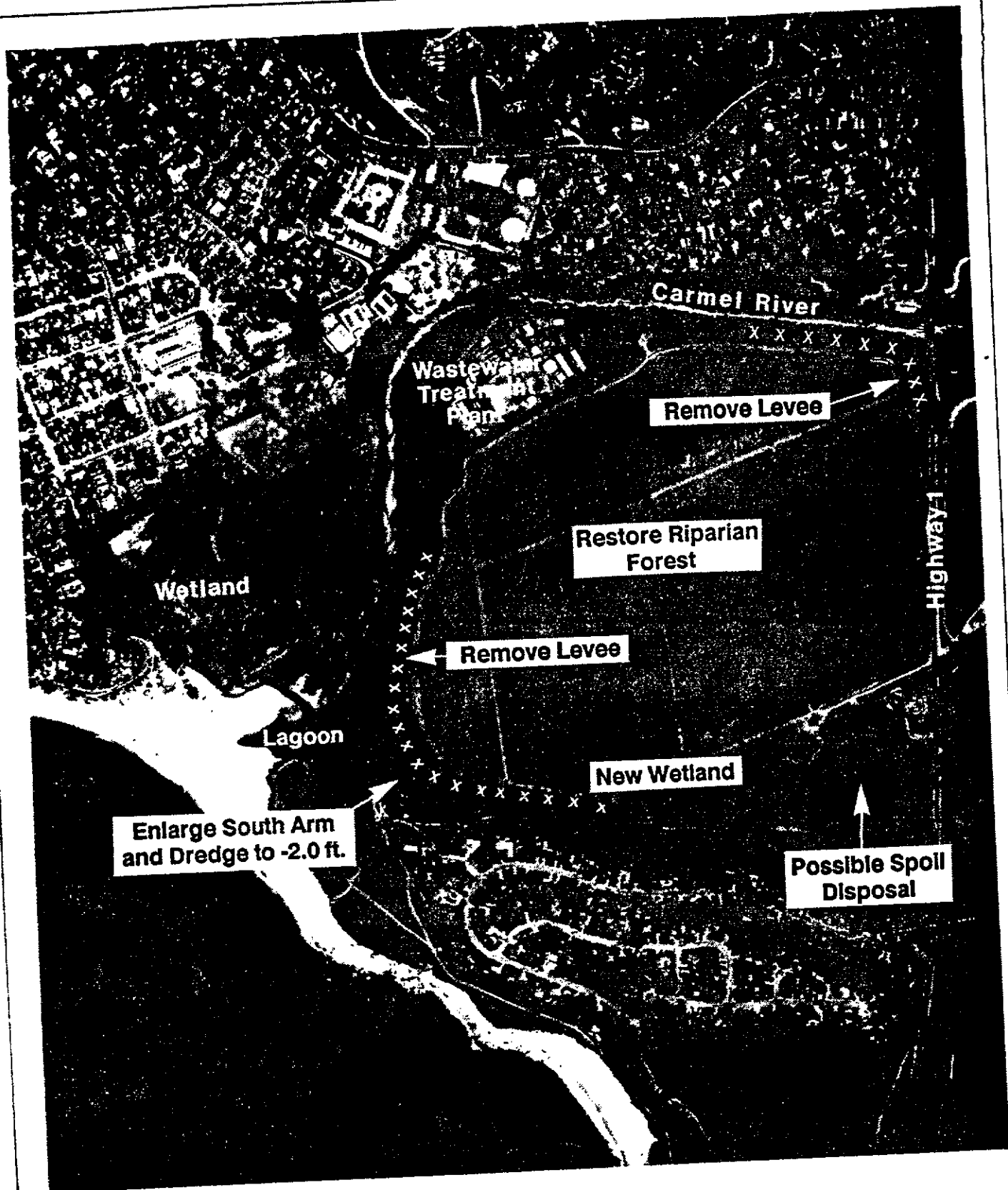


Carmel River Lagoon and Vicinity



Philip Williams & Associates, Ltd.
Consultants in Hydrology

Figure
1

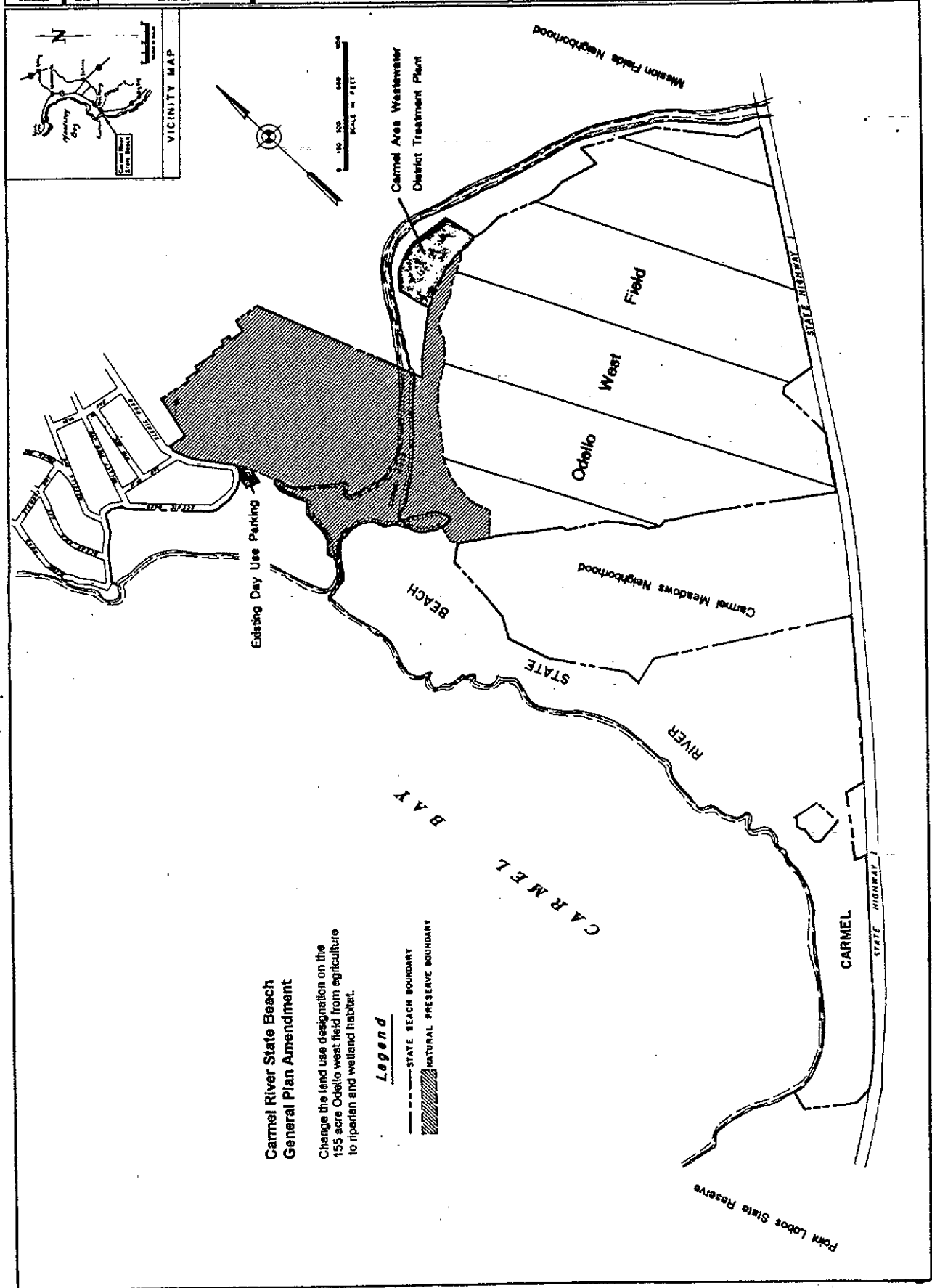


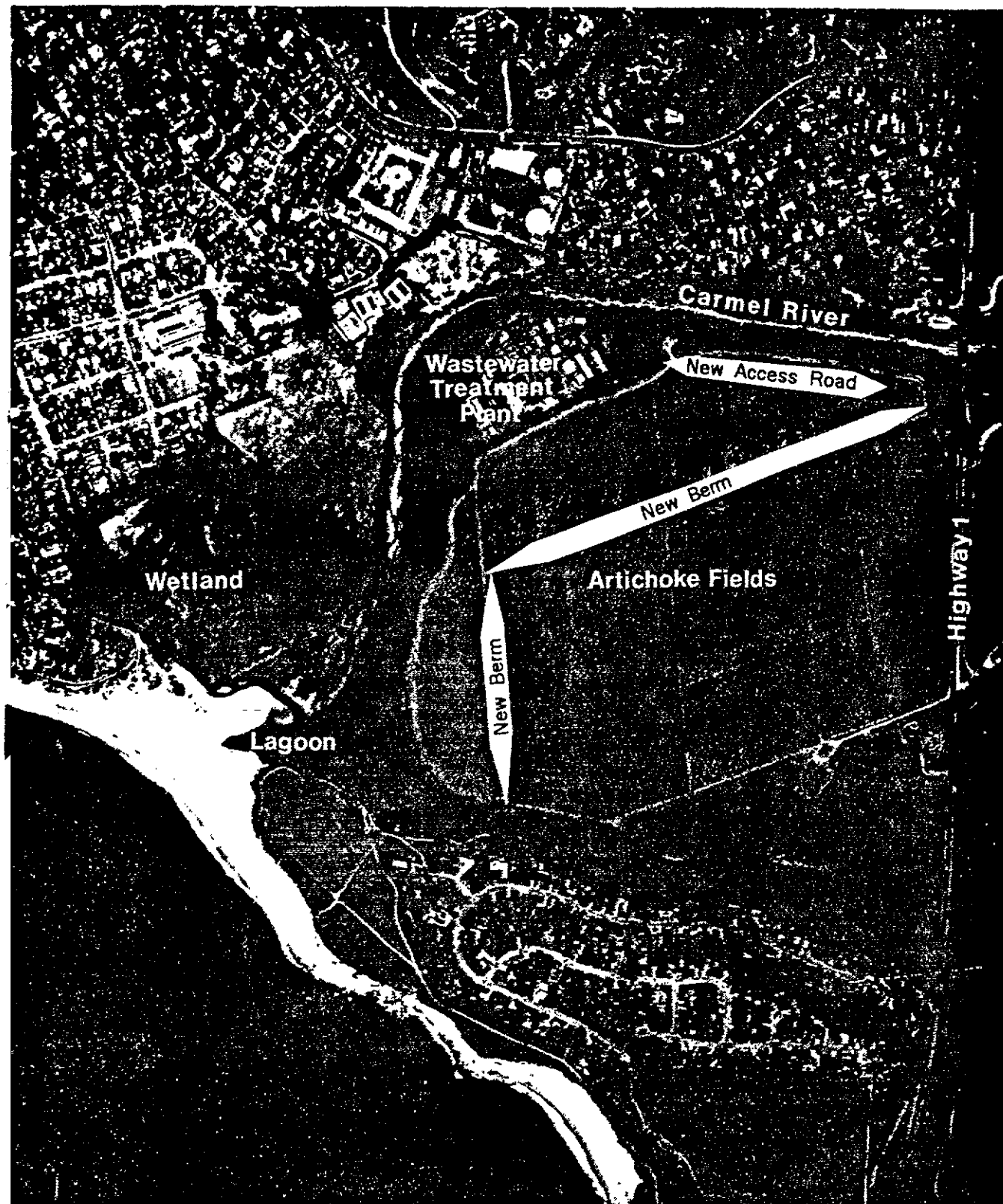
Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan



Phillip Williams & Associates, Ltd.
Consultants in Hydrology

Figure
2





Interim Management Strategy

FIGURE

4

References

- California Department of Parks and Recreation. Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan. Approved May 1979.
- California Department of Parks and Recreation. Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment. August 1988. Approved June 1987.
- Carmel River Task Force. Carmel River Task Force Final Report. Prepared for the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and the Residents of the Carmel River 100-year Flood Plain. May 1995.
- Nolte and Associates. Lower Carmel River Flood Control Project Engineering Report. Monterey County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. July 1989.
- Williams, John. Draft Carmel River Lagoon Enhancement Plan. Philip Williams and Associates, Ltd. Prepared for Carmel River Steelhead Association, California State Coastal Conservancy, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, in cooperation with California Department of Parks and Recreation. December 1991.

Appendix - California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

The Department of Parks and Recreation prepared a negative declaration for the October 1995 Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach Preliminary General Plan Amendment. Copies of the Negative Declaration were distributed through the State Clearinghouse to the following agencies:

Resources Agency
Dept. of Conservation
Dept of Fish and Game, Region 3
Office of Historic Preservation
Dept. of Water Resources
Caltrans, District 5
State Water Resources Control Board/Water Quality
Regional Water Quality Control Board - Central Coast Region
Native American Heritage Commission
State Lands Commission

In addition copies of the Negative Declaration were sent directly to the following individuals:

Larry Levine Mission Fields	Lee Otter California Coastal Commission
Mayor White City of Carmel	Owen Stewart Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Bruce Elliott Dept. of Fish and Game	Greg Albright Dept. of Transportation - District 5
Jonathan Barker Carmel Meadows Association	Darby Fuerst Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
Brian Fouch Monterey County Planning Dept.	Karyn Gear State Coastal Conservancy
Roy Thomas Carmel River Steelhead Association	
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments	

Copies of the Negative Declaration were made available for public viewing at the following locations:

DPR Northern Service Center
1725 23rd Street
Sacramento, CA

Monterey County Library - Carmel Valley Branch
65 West Carmel Valley Road
Carmel Valley, CA

DPR Monterey District Office
2211 Garden Road
Monterey, CA

The only comments received as a result of the distribution of the negative declaration were from:

Department of Fish and Game - letter of support

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments - no comments

Governor's Office of Planning and Research - no comments

Following the completion of the public comment period and review of the comments received, the Department of Parks and Recreation determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. A Notice of Determination was filed with the Office of Planning and Research on January 19, 1996.

Copies of the Notice of Determination, comment letters, and the Negative Declaration are attached.

**CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
NOTICE OF DETERMINATION**

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: California Department of Parks and
Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 of the Public Resources Code.

Project Title: **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

State Clearinghouse Number: 95123011

Contact Person: **ROBERT UELTZEN**

Phone Number: (916) 323-0975


Project Location: **CARMEL RIVER STATE BEACH, MONTEREY COUNTY**

Project Description: **AMEND POINT LOBOS STATE RESERVE AND CARMEL RIVER STATE BEACH GENERAL PLAN TO CHANGE THE DESIGNATED LAND USE OF THE 155 ACRE ODELLO PROPERTY FROM AGRICULTURE TO WETLAND AND RIPARIAN HABITAT.**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has approved the project and has made the following determinations regarding the project:

1. ☒ The project will not have a significant effect in the environment.
☐ The project will have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☒ A Negative Declaration was prepared pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
☐ A Final Environmental Impact Report has been completed in compliance with CEQA and has been presented to the decision-making body of this Department for review and consideration of the information contained in the Final EIR prior to approval of the project.
3. Mitigation measures ☐ were ☒ were not made conditions of project approval.
4. A Statement of Overriding Considerations ☐ was ☒ was not adopted for this project.
5. Findings ☐ were ☒ were not made on environmental effects of the project.

The EIR or Negative Declaration and record of project approval may be examined at the Resource Management Division, California Department of Parks and Recreation located at 1416 Ninth Street, Room 917, Sacramento, CA.

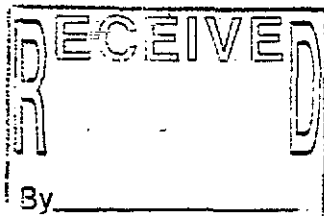


Signature **KENNETH B. JONES**
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PARK STEWARDSHIP

Title

Date

Date Received for Filing



Memorandum

To : Mr. Robert Ueltzen
Northern Service Center
California Department of Parks
and Recreation
Post Office Box 942896
Sacramento, California 94295-0001


Date: December 15, 1995

From : Department of Fish and Game

Subject: Odello Parcel, Negative Declaration for General Plan Amendment

Department of Fish and Game personnel have reviewed the Negative Declaration for the subject proposal and strongly endorse the implementation of the conversion proposal. Department personnel have been involved in the local development and review of this concept since its inception. We believe that it will result in significant long-term natural resource enhancement of the parcel, while resolving a vexing flood control problem that threatens adjacent residential areas along the Carmel River.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Bruce Elliott, Senior Wildlife Biologist, at (408) 649-2890.


Ken Aasen
Acting Regional Manager
Region 3

AMBAG

ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

(408) 883-3750 FAX (408) 883-3755

Office Location: 445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina
P.O. Box 809, Marina, CA 93933-0809

January 11, 1996

Robert Ueltzen
Northern Service Center
California Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Re: **MCH # 019605** - Negative Declaration for Point Lobos State Reserve and
Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment

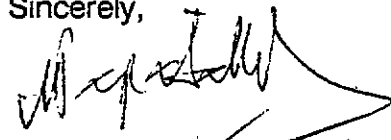
Dear Mr. Ueltzen:

AMBAG'S Regional Clearinghouse circulated a summary notice of your environmental document to our member agencies and interested parties for review and comment.

The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on January 10, 1996 and has no comments at this time.

Thank you for complying with the Clearinghouse process.

Sincerely,



Nicolas Papadakis
Executive Director

NP:jb

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



January 4, 1996

ROBERT UELTZEN
DEPT. OF PARKS AND RECREATION
1725 23RD STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816

Subject: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FOR CARMEL SCH #: 95123011

Dear ROBERT UELTZEN:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental document to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and none of the state agencies have comments. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. When contacting the Clearinghouse in this matter, please use the eight-digit State Clearinghouse number so that we may respond promptly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Antero A. Rivasplata".

ANTERO A. RIVASPLATA
Chief, State Clearinghouse

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
NEGATIVE DECLARATION
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared a Negative Declaration for the General Plan Amendment for Carmel River State Beach.

Copies of the Negative Declaration are available from the Northern Service Center of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1725 23rd Street, Sacramento, CA 95816. Copies are also available for public viewing at the Carmel Valley Branch - Monterey County Library at 65 West Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley and at the Monterey District Office, 2211 Garden Road, Monterey. If there are any questions, please call Robert Ueltzen at (916) 323-0975. Comments on the Negative Declaration must be received at the Northern Service Center at 1725 23rd Street, Room 200, Sacramento by January 5, 1996.

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NAME OF PROJECT:

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

PROJECT PROPONENT:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PROJECT LOCATION:

CARMEL RIVER STATE BEACH, MONTEREY COUNTY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

AMEND GENERAL PLAN TO CHANGE LAND USE OF THE 155 ACRE ODELLO PROPERTY FROM AGRICULTURE TO WETLAND AND RIPARIAN HABITAT. AMENDMENT WILL PERMIT EXPANSION OF NATIVE HABITAT, PUBLIC USE, AND IMPROVED FLOOD CONTROL.

CONTACT PERSON:

ROBERT UELTZEN

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

P.O. BOX 942896

SACRAMENTO, CA 94296 - 0001

(916) 323-0975

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PROPOSES TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT, PURSUANT TO STATE C.E.Q.A. GUIDELINES (TITLE 14 - CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS) REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE - SECTION 21000 ET SEQ.). IF THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE CHARACTER OF THE PROJECT BEFORE ITS IMPLEMENTATION, ANOTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DETERMINATION WILL BE MADE.

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

State Clearinghouse # _____

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Name of Project: Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General
Plan Amendment.B. Checklist Date: 10/25/95C. Contact Person: Kenneth L. Gray, Associate SP Resource Ecologist
Telephone: (408) 649-2862D. Location: Carmel River at Highway One, Monterey County, CAE. Description: This project will amend the Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan by changing the land use designation on the 155 acre Odello west field from agriculture to wetland and riparian habitat. This field has been leased by the State for artichoke production since it was acquired by the State in 1974.F. Persons and Organizations Contacted: Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Carmel River Steelhead Association, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, CA State Coastal Conservancy.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS. (Explain all "yes" and "maybe" answers. Also, mark with an asterisk (*) and explain all "no" answers that might reasonably be questioned.)

- | | Yes | Maybe | No |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A. Earth. Will the proposal result in: | | | |
| 1. Unstable earth conditions such as slope failure or mudslides?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Disruptions, displacements, compaction, or overcovering of the soil?..... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Change in natural topography or major ground surface relief features?..... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet, or lake?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Air. Will the proposal result in: | | | |
| 1. Substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The creation of objectionable odors?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| C. Water. Will the proposal result in: | | | |
| 1. Changes in the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?..... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?..... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Discharge of pollutants into surface waters, or any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Alteration of the bed of a lake, stream or river?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Change in the quantity of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavation?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supply?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Exposure of people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding or tidal waves?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Significant changes in the temperature, flow or chemical content of surface thermal springs?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
D. Plant Life. Will the proposal result in:			
1. Change in the diversity of species, or number of any species of plant (including trees, shrubs, grass, and aquatic plants)?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of plants?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Reduction or deterioration of any rare or endangered plant community?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Reduction of acreage of any agricultural crop or pasturage ?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Animal Life. Will the proposal result in:			
1. Change in the diversity of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, or insects)?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, threatened or endangered species of animals?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
F. Noise. Will the proposal result in:			
1. Increase in existing noise levels?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
G. Land Use. Will the proposal result in:			
1. A substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Energy and Natural Resources.. Will the proposal result in:			
1. Increase in the rate of use of any natural resources or energy?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Substantial depletion of any nonrenewable resources?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I. Risk of Upset. Will the proposal result in:			
1. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to, oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Possible interference with emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- J. *Population and Housing*. Will the proposal result in:
1. The alteration, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of the area?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 2. Effecting existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- K. *Transportation/ Circulation*. Will the proposal result in:
1. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 2. Affecting existing parking facilities, or create a demand for new parking?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 3. Substantial impact upon existing transportation systems?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 4. Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?.... ☐ ☐ ☒
 5. Alterations to waterbone, rail, or air traffic?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 6. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- L. *Public Services*. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas:
1. Fire protection?..... ☒ ☐ ☐
 2. Police protection?..... ☒ ☐ ☐
 3. Schools?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 4. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?..... ☒ ☐ ☐
 5. Other governmental services?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- M. *Utilities*. Will the proposal result in a need for new systems or substantial alterations to the following utilities:
1. Electric power or natural gas?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 2. Communication systems?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 3. Water?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 4. Sewer or septic tanks?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 5. Storm water drainage?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 6. Solid waste disposal?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- N. *Human Health*. Will the proposal result in:
1. Creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
 2. Exposure of people to potential health hazards?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- O. *Plan Conformance*. Will the proposal result in:
1. Conflict with the State Park System's unit's adopted general plan?..... ☒ ☐ ☐
 2. Conflict with the Department of Park and Recreation's Resource Management Directives?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- P. *Aesthetics*. Will the proposal result in:
1. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or will the proposal result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?..... ☒ ☐ ☐
 2. New sources of light or glare?..... ☐ ☐ ☒
- Q. *Recreation*. Will the proposal result in:
1. An impact upon the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities?..... ☒ ☐ ☐

R. *Cultural Resources*.

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Will the proposal result in the alteration of or the destruction of a prehistoric or historic archeological site?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Will the proposal result in adverse physical or aesthetic effects to a prehistoric or historic building, structure, or object?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does the proposal have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Will the proposal restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

S. *Mandatory Findings of Significance*.

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

III. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND POTENTIAL MITIGATIONS (See Attached Comments)

IV. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☒ I find the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because mitigation measures have been added to the project. A **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- ☐ I find the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, but an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** will be prepared according to Department of Parks and Recreation general plan procedures.
- ☐ I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

Date: 10 / 25 / 95

Signed: Kenneth L. Gray

Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan Amendment

California Department of Parks and Recreation Initial Study Checklist Explanation of Potential Environmental Impacts October 1995

II. A. Earth. Will the proposal result in:

Item 2. Disruptions, displacements, compaction, or over covering of the soil?

Future projects consistent with the proposed change in land use could involve removal or lowering of levees between the Carmel River and the Odello west field, dredging the south arm of the Carmel River Lagoon, and lowering elevations on a 10 acre area of the Odello west field adjacent to the south arm. These actions to restore lagoon and wetland habitats would involve excavation of 125,000 cubic yards of soil. There are several alternatives for disposal of the excavated soil. The 25,000 cubic yards of soil excavated from the lagoon could be deposited on the southwest corner of the Odello west field. This 8.6 acre parcel between the barn and Highway One would be raised an average of 1.8 feet by this soil disposal. Following disposal the site would be vegetated with native grassland and coastal scrub species. An alternative use of this parcel would be for continued agriculture. The soil deposition would make it unsuitable for riparian forest revegetation.

The 100,000 cubic yards of soil excavated to create the 10 acre wetland could either be disposed off-site, if a suitable, economically feasible location were found, or spread evenly over the entire Odello west field. Disposal on the field would raise the average elevation approximately 5 inches which would keep the site suitable for establishment of riparian vegetation.

Off-site soil disposal would be an economical and desirable option if a nearby project requires fill. One possible such location is the area between the Carmel Meadows subdivision and the Odello West field adjacent to Highway One. This private land is proposed for development as a residential subdivision which may require fill to form suitable building sites.

Another potential off-site disposal location is the privately owned Odello East artichoke field. A residential subdivision is proposed for a portion of this property. If build, this project will require fill to raise the building sites above the

100 year flood plain. Other off-site disposal sites may be identified in the future that are related to or independent from development projects.

All soil disposal activities, either on or off-site will be subject to additional environmental analysis and review.

Item 3. Changes in natural topography or major ground surface relief features?

Future projects to restore habitat could change existing topography as described in the enhancement plan. These changes would involve removing man made levees and excavations to create lagoon and wetland habitats that existed prior to human modifications. The topographic changes would restore natural topography to the extent feasible.

Item 6. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet, or lake?

Removal of the river bank levees will allow the natural process of flood plain sediment deposition to be reestablished. When river flows overtop the river channel, sediment laden water will flow onto the field. As the water velocity decreases much of the sediment will be deposited in the field. This is a natural process that should assist with the establishment of riparian vegetation.

II. C. Water. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. Changes in the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh water?

Lowering of the south bank levee of the Carmel River will allow flood waters to flow onto and across the Odello west field, reducing the volume of flood flows confined in the Carmel River main channel. The diversion of these flows will partially recreate the natural process of flood water spilling over the river bank onto the river's flood plain. Water flowing onto the floodplain will lower water elevations in the main channel, reducing the likelihood of flows overtopping the levee on the north side of the river. This north side levee was overtopped in January and March 1995 resulting in flooding of homes in the Mission Fields area.

Item 3. Change the amount of surface water in any water body?

As described in item 1, the volume of water in the Carmel River channel will be

) lowered by lowering the south side levee. The hydrologic analysis that lead to this conclusion is discussed in the proposed Lower Carmel River Flood Control Project prepared for Monterey County in 1989.

The surface area and volume of the Carmel River lagoon could be increased by dredging the south arm. This is being proposed to expand and enhance habitat for aquatic life in the lagoon, including steelhead.

II. D. Plant Life. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. Change in the diversity of species or number of any species of plant?

This proposal could result in the removal of 155 acres of artichokes and their replacement with a complex of native wetland and riparian plant species.

Soil removal and vegetation clearing will result in loss of riparian trees currently occupying the levees proposed for lowering. This habitat will not be permanently lost since following the earthwork, the levee sites will be revegetated with the same species as those removed. The loss of habitat will be temporary and will be greatly expanded if the artichoke field is converted to riparian forest.

Item 4. Reduction of acreage of any agricultural crop or pasturage.

) This proposal could result in the loss of 155 acres of agricultural production. The site is classified a prime agricultural land. There is approximately 6,500 acres of land producing artichokes in Monterey County. Removal of this field from production would result in a 2.4% reduction in artichoke acreage for Monterey County.

Partial implementation of the proposal involving the lowering of the south bank levee to provide the flood control benefits could occur while the field remains in artichoke production. Lowering the levee would increase the potential for flood damage to the artichoke fields.

II. E. Animal Life. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. Change in the diversity of species or the numbers of any species of animals?

) The artichoke field has very limited value for wildlife. The presence of wildlife is discouraged to minimize crop damage. Riparian and wetland habitats are known to provide excellent habitat values. Establishment of 155 acres of riparian,

wetland, and aquatic habitat will significantly benefit wildlife populations.

II. F. Noise. Will the proposal result in:

1. Increase in existing noise levels?

Use of earth moving equipment to remove levees and excavate wetland habitat will create temporary increase in existing noise levels. This temporary noise will not significantly impact people or wildlife.

II. G. Land Use. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. A substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?

The conversion of 155 acres of agricultural land to native habitat is a significant change. The improved habitat values and flood control benefits make this change a positive effect.

II. I. Risk of Upset. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to, oil pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?

Flooding of the Carmel Area Wastewater Treatment Plant and disruption of access to the plant due to floods could increase the risk of releasing untreated sewage and chemicals into the river and the ocean. The plant is designed to withstand a 100 year flood event; it continued to operate during the January and March 1995 floods. The damage to the treatment plant access road and the Highway One bridge disrupted vehicle access to the plant and prevented the removal of sledge. Development of a new access road to the plant currently being planned by the Wastewater District should minimize the disruption of access and minimize the risk of upsetting plant operations.

II. L. Public Services. Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered government services in any of the following areas?

Item 1. Fire Protection

The conversion of the agricultural field to native vegetation will increase the risk of wildfire which could possibly threaten homes in the Carmel Meadows area to the south. The relatively high moisture content of riparian vegetation makes the risk of a destructive wildfire unlikely except during the most severe weather

conditions. The proposals to increase wetland and aquatic habitats along the south side of the field should reduce the risk to the Carmel Meadows area.

Item 2. Police Protection

The conversion of the agricultural field to native vegetation will increase the potential for illegal camping because of the concealment the native vegetation will provide. State Park Rangers/Peace Officers will need to regularly patrol the area to keep illegal activities to a minimum. Staff currently pass by this area on their patrols of Point Lobos and Carmel River Beach so monitoring this area should not be a major increase in workload.

Item 4. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads:

The Carmel Area Sanitary District has a access road across State Beach property between Highway One and their treatment plant. If the levee adjacent to the road were lowered, access to the plant would be disrupted during flood events. The District will need to plan for the temporary loss of this access via this road to assure continued operation of the plant during flood events.

The breached levees and the proposal in the enhancement plan to remove the levee adjacent to the treatment plant road will require that the road be relocated or modified to provide reliable access to the plant. The Wastewater District is working with DPR and other agencies on a new alignment for the road that will provide for the needed access. The road will be elevated to provide for protection against moderate flood events and may be armored to reduce the potential for damage when the road is inundated by bigger flood events. Culverts may be included in the design to allow low flows to pass under the road.

II. O. Plan Conformance. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. Conflict with the State Park System's unit's adopted general plan?

The Point Lobos State Reserve and Carmel River State Beach General Plan calls for retention of the Odello west field in agriculture. This general plan amendment is being proposed to change the land use designation from agriculture to native habitat.

The Carmel Area Local Coastal Plan designation for the Odello west field is "Agricultural Preserve." Following approval of the General Plan Amendment by the State Park and Recreation Commission the Department will work with Monterey County and the Coastal Commission on a Local Coastal Plan Amendment.

II. P. Aesthetics. Will the proposal result in:

Item 1. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or will the proposal result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?

As woody riparian vegetation becomes established on the Odello west field the unobstructed long distance views from Highway One and the Carmel Meadows area will be partially blocked. The view will transition toward a riparian forest. Although the viewing distance will be reduced, the complexity and natural character of the view will be enhanced.

The proposal to realign the Carmel Area Wastewater Plant access road could create potential for a degradation of the view from Highway One. The road will need to be designed to minimize its visibility from the Highway. In addition, vegetation will quickly become established that will screen the new road from view of the Highway.

II. Q. Recreation. Will the proposal results in:

Item 1. An impact upon the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities?

The Odello west field is currently closed to public use. With the conversion of the field to native habitat there will be opportunities for hiking along designated trails, nature study, and related passive recreational experiences. The opportunity for access will be a positive impact on recreational opportunities.

Acknowledgements

This General Plan Amendment was prepared by Kenneth L. Gray, District Ecologist, Monterey District.

The Negative Declaration was circulated by Robert Ueltzen, Associate Park and Recreation Specialist, Northern Service Center.

Mary Wright, Monterey District Superintendent, and Bruce Kennedy, General Plan Manager, reviewed and edited the text.